



Results and Accountability Building Block

Background

There is significant political momentum in favour of re-energising the results focus of the effectiveness agenda, both in terms of doing what is right, and doing it the right way. Strengthening accountability is a powerful driver to enhance the impact of all development resources and to achieve greater progress towards delivering sustainable development.

In Paris and Accra we agreed that *developing countries and development co-operation providers shift focus to development results*, and that we be more accountable to each other to deliver effective aid, emphasising transparency and accountability to enable citizen engagement and the important role of parliament and civil society. The evaluation of the Paris Declaration (Phase 2) found that of the five principles, managing for development results and mutual accountability are amongst the least advanced. This is supported by evidence from the Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration and from the UN Development Cooperation Forum which suggests that while there has been some progress on managing for developing results and strengthening accountability, it has been limited.

The spirit behind the agreed aid effectiveness principles remains relevant, but we need to advance aspects of the principles that will help us focus on development outcomes and empower countries to realize their full potential. We also need to advance them in a way that adapts to the particular context and capacity of developing countries.

In recent years, there has also been an increasing demand for greater results information to hold development co-operation providers and developing countries more closely accountable for the results of their partnerships, to more clearly assess progress on poverty reduction and sustainable development. However, due to a lack of confidence and a risk averse culture, development co-operation providers have in some cases set up separate systems that undermine developing countries' own capacity to define, deliver, track and evaluate their results. There has also been a tendency to only track resource flows and inputs, and not also development outcomes, outputs and results. Furthermore, there are often too many results indicators, which are not owned by the developing country. Results information is thus often not clear and strategic enough to assess if our partnerships are making a lasting difference to the lives of the poor.

Sustainable results are best achieved when intermediate steps are accomplished along the way, building on strong policy frameworks and capable institutions, through to programme-specific inputs and outputs. Strong results frameworks should measure, monitor and evaluate along this whole "*continuum*", helping us understand whether we are achieving the development impact goals we have set before us, in a cost effective way.



The Proposal

Many developing countries have taken important steps in making aid more effective by defining the results they want to achieve. For example, Rwanda's government and its development co-operation providers use common and transparent frameworks including a limited set of agreed indicators for assessing the government's performance in implementing the national development strategy, and individual and collective donor performance towards agreed goals for the quality of development co-operation. We describe these as Country Results and Accountability Agreements.

Country Results and Accountability Agreements can build upon the positive experiences to date and will strengthen dialogue and accountability between developing countries and development co-operation providers and between developing countries and their citizens, to deliver sustainable and effective results.

Agreements will be defined and led by developing countries and will consist of two mutually supportive pillars:

- A Developing Country Pillar: A developing country-led results framework, drawn from the national development plan, which sets out a limited number of sustainable outcome/output results to be achieved.
- A Development Cooperation Provider Pillar: A performance framework drawn from a local aid policy (or similar) which sets out locally adapted aid and development effectiveness priorities and targets for each development co-operation provider.

The agreements will operationalise transparent country-led results frameworks and platforms to assess performance.

In addition to these pillars, developing countries and development co-operation providers will explore together additional initiatives aimed at improving the delivery, measurement, learning and accountability for results. These initiatives can include, amongst others, agreements for:

Strengthen and use Developing Country Systems: e.g. the strengthening of statistical, monitoring, evaluation systems and evidence-based decision making, i.e. through support for an Action Plan for Statistics; promoting joint and developing country-led monitoring and evaluations; and joint approaches to risk management.

Reinforcing Integrated Results-Based Public Sector Management: e.g. developing country assessments and capacity development supported by donors, to ensure informed decision making throughout the public sector; and involving Communities of Practice on Managing for Development Results (MfDR) to nurture change agents, build capacity and promote reform.

Results Based Aid: e.g. joint learning on results-based financing approaches at national, regional or global level; and the piloting of results-based aid; the enhanced use of results based financing approaches.

Results reporting: e.g. enhanced transparency of results information, through use of web-based platforms; improved practices of results reporting by developing country; and developing and applying good practice principles for donor results frameworks, such as regular and consistent reporting.



Country Results and Accountability Agreements will be developed at country level, based on the following principles:

- (i) **Inclusivity:** Developing country led processes that include specific roles for civil society, parliamentarians, and citizens. Involve all possible development partners and use information from the agreement to inform a dialogue on what is working (or not) in the achievement of results.
- (ii) **Country systems:** Improve and use as far as possible existing structures and frameworks (such as national plans and poverty reduction strategy programmes) and aim to reduce bureaucracy in development management.
- (iii) **Streamlined:** Led by the developing country, monitor a selected set of meaningful indicators and agree joint mechanisms to assess progress regarding the implementation of the agreements.
- (iv) **Joint learning for evidence-based decisions:** Effective learning should be participatory and inclusive so that all stakeholders can contribute to understanding the successes and failures of a program, ensuring that these shared lessons are fed back into decisions for subsequent planning and design. Establishing base lines, joint impact evaluations and audits should be built in to the agreements to ensure learning about effective use of resources.
- (v) **Transparent:** partners agree to be transparent on actions and resources provided to achieve and analyse results. Easily accessible information will be made public on results achieved and development cooperation provider performance, using existing web-platforms where possible.
- (vi) **Capacity development for results:** development cooperation providers will support initiatives in areas such as planning, budgeting, delivery, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of results, based on demand and tailored to developing country government, parliamentarians and civil society
- (vii) **Adaptability:** use common frameworks where that is appropriate; but also allow for distinct approaches (for example across different sectors, or for project specific aid intervention) where that is appropriate. This allows for innovation that will help keep results frameworks current and relevant. Results work should ideally be done from the ground-up.

These agreements can improve on previous such systems by focussing on a limited number of indicators, involving all actors, including civil society, and with assessment of development cooperation providers at the core of the agreement. There is also greater ownership in implementation by focussing on results and outcomes, rather than conditionality.

Whilst the frameworks will be led by the developing country, development co-operation providers will engage in joint learning and dialogue and subscribe to the pillars and the principles of the agreement. Development co-operation provider will seek to minimise additional requirements.

Post Busan

Developing countries and development co-operation providers who endorse this approach agree to work together to strengthen their cooperation and structures to track results and deepen accountability. As a first step, developing countries agree to begin a process at country level by March 2012 to assess what steps (if any) are needed to take forward the results and accountability commitments agreed in Busan.



The process will be time-bound, do not impose additional costs as far as possible, and include all country stakeholders. Where costs are incurred to implementing initiatives in-country, development co-operation providers will contribute to them.

Whilst agreements should be led and defined at the country level, international aspects of the results and mutual accountability agenda should continue to be advanced in forums such as the UN Development Cooperation Forum, ensuring strong linkages at country, sectoral, regional (including South-South Cooperation) and global level. Emphasis will be placed on joint learning and evaluation on results and mutual accountability including through knowledge exchange networks, the Communities of Practice on MfDR, a Learning Initiative on Results based Approaches, and the principles of donor reporting.

Global accountability mechanisms are vital to ensure that the incentives are in place to effect real positive change in results and accountability. The impact and lessons from implementing initiatives will feed into the agreed global post Busan governance structure and other relevant forums.

Finally this approach will ensure coherence and shared learning with other relevant initiatives emerging from Busan such as the Busan Action Plan on Statistics, the Gender Data Harmonisation initiative and commitments on transparency.

Supporters of the building block:

Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, European Commission , Finland, France, , Germany, Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Honduras, Ireland, Mozambique, Netherlands, Norway, Rwanda, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Togo, United States of America

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